

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSC-07 NSCE-00 L-02 EB-03 SP-01

AID-10 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 DRC-01 /056 W

----- 043770

R 241000Z APR 74

FM AMEMBASSY DACCA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2848

INFO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 DACCA 1841

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, BG, US

SUBJECT: COURTESY CALL ON PRIME MINISTER

SUMMARY: I SAW MUJIB FOR THIRTY MINUTES TODAY, FINDING HIM IN APPARENT GOOD HEALTH AND SPIRITS TWO WEEKS AFTER HIS RETURN FROM MEDICAL TREATMENT IN MOSCOW. I CONVEYED PRESIDENT'S CONGRATULATIONS ON HIS RECOVERY AND WISHES FOR HIS CONTINUED GOOD HEALTH, AS WELL AS PRESIDENT'S APPRECIATION FOR HIS ROLE IN THE DELHI AGREEMENT, AND DELIVERED PRESIDENT'S LETTER OF THANKS IN REPLY TO ACTING PRIME MINISTER'S MESSAGE OF SYMPATHY ON RECENT TORNADO DISASTER. PRIME MINISTER AND I CONGRATULATED EACH OTHER ON GOOD STATE OF OUR CURRENT RELATIONS, AND I EXPRESSED OUR SATISFACTION AT MANY ELEMENTS IN COMMON BETWEEN OUR APPROACHES TO PROBLEMS HERE. HE REVIEWED BACKGROUND OF RECONCILIATION EFFORTS WITH PAKISTAN, SUGGESTING HE WOULD TAKE HARD LINE WITH BHUTTO IN TRYING TO RECOVER ASSETS FROM GOP. FINALLY, I MENTIONED IMPORTANCE WE ATTACH TO DEBT RESOLUTION ISSUE, INDICATING I WOULD BE REVIEWING THIS QUESTION SHORTLY WITH HIS DEPUTY CHAIRMAN OF PLANNING COMMISSION. END SUMMARY.

1. THE PRIME MINISTER GAVE DCM NEWBERRY AND ME A WARM WELCOME TODAY AS I PAID MY INITIAL COURTESY CALL ON HIM IN HIS NEWLY OCCUPIED OFFICE AT THE NEW CAPITOL. AFTER USUAL PLEASANTRIES, I  
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CONVEYED ORALLY PRESIDENT NIXON'S PERSONAL CONGRATULATIONS ON

PRIME MINISTER'S RECOVERY AND WISHES FOR HIS CONTINUED GOOD HEALTH AND ALSO EXPRESSED THE PRESIDENT'S APPRECIATION "FOR THE FAR-SIGHTED STATESMANSHIP DISPLAYED BY THE PRIME MINISTER PERSONALLY IN HELPING TO BRING ABOUT THE HISTORIC DELHI AGREEMENT WHICH OPENS THE WAY FOR A NEW ERA OF PEACEFUL COOPERATION IN SOUTH ASIA." I ALSO HANDED HIM PRESIDENT'S REPLY TO ACTING PRIME MINISTER'S MESSAGE OF SYMPATHY ABOUT VICTIMS OF RECENT TORNADO, AND PASSED ALONG GREETINGS FROM ATTORNEY GENERAL SAXBE AND DEPUTY SECRETARY RUSH WHO HAD BECOME ACQUAINTED WITH MUJIB IN DACCA.

2. MUJIB THANKED ME FOR THESE MESSAGES, ASKING THAT I CONVEY HIS APPRECIATION TO EACH, AND PARTICULARLY FOR THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGES. HE ASKED ME TO REPORT TO THE PRESIDENT ON SOME OF HIS PROBLEMS AS HE SAW THEM IN BANGLADESH. HE THEN REVIEWED HIS DOMESTIC SITUATION AND HIS RELATIONS WITH PAKISTAN ALONG FOLLOWING LINES.

3. THE PRIME MINISTER RECALLED IN SOME DETAIL THE SUFFERING THAT BENGALLEES HAD ENDURED AT THE HANDS OF PAKISTAN, REMARKING THAT THE PAKISTANIS HAD TAKEN EVERYTHING AND HAD GIVEN NOTHING. IT WAS THE INTERNATIONAL RELIEF EFFORT THROUGH THE UNITED NATIONS AND BILATERAL ASSISTANCE THAT HAD ENABLED BANGLADESH TO RECOVER IN THE PAST TWO YEARS. HE NOTED THAT THE UNITED STATES HAD BEEN THE NUMBER ONE DONOR BUT REFERRED AS WELL TO THE EFFORTS OF INDIA, THE UN, AND THE SOVIET UNION. GOING BACK REPEATEDLY TO THE PAKISTANI PERFORMANCE BEFORE INDEPENDENCE, THE PRIME MINISTER INSISTED THAT PAKISTAN MUST NOW GIVE BANGLADESH ITS SHARE OF ASSETS. CONSPICUOUSLY UN-BULLISH OVER THE PROSPECT OF FUTURE RELATIONS WITH PAKISTAN, THE PRIME MINISTER NOTED THAT THE NEGOTIATIONS PRECEDING THE DELHI ACCORD HAD BEEN DEADLOCKED ON THE ISSUE OF REPATRIATION OF BIHARIS. HE HAD PROPOSED THAT A NEW SURVEY OF THE BIHARIS BE CONDUCTED BY THE SWISS GOVERNMENT, THE ICRC, OR SOME OTHER NEUTRAL AGENCY, BUT BHUTTO HAD REFUSED AND IN THE END HE (MUJIB) HAD FINALLY YIELDED IN THE INTEREST OF PEACE. IN ANSWER TO MY QUESTION, THE PRIME MINISTER IMPLIED THAT HE DID NOT EXPECT THAT PAKISTAN WOULD TAKE SUBSTANTIALLY MORE NON-BENGALLEES THAN THEY HAD ALREADY ACCEPTED, MAINTAINING HOWEVER THAT IT WAS THEIR RESPONSIBILITY TO DO SO.

4. ON BANGLADESH'S INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, THE PRIME MINISTER  
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EMPHASIZED THAT HE WANTS FRIENDLY RELATIONS WITH ALL NATIONS. BANGLADESH NEEDS HELP FROM ALL COUNTRIES. HE DRAMATIZED THE POVERTY OF THE COUNTRY AND POINTED TO THE HEAVY BURDEN OF HAVING TO SPEND SCARCE FOREIGN EXCHANGE TO BUY FOOD, INCLUDING HEAVY COMMERCIAL PURCHASES IN THE UNITED STATES. HIS PROBLEM WAS MADE MORE ACUTE BY THE NECESSITY TO REVISE THE FIVE-YEAR PLAN BECAUSE OF VERY HIGH PRICES ON THE WORLD MARKET. THIS MEANT A CONTINUED NEED FOR OUTSIDE ASSISTANCE.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 DACCA 1841

LIMDIS

5. REMINISCING ABOUT THE COURSE OF EVENTS SINCE INDEPENDENCE, THE PRIME MINISTER POINTED WITH PRIDE TO THE ADOPTION OF A CONSTITUTION, THE CONDUCT OF DEMOCRATIC ELECTIONS, CITING PARTICULARLY THE SUCCESSFUL AND COMPLETELY FREE LOCAL LEVEL ("UNION") ELECTIONS EARLIER THIS YEAR. HE WAS DETERMINED TO ESTABLISH DEMOCRACY FIRMLY IN BANGLADESH IN SPITE OF THE FACT THAT HE HAD HIS PROBLEMS WITH LAW AND ORDER. RIGHT NOW HE WAS MAKING A RENEWED EFFORT TO GET CONTROL OF ILLEGAL WEAPONS SPREAD THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY. HE BLAMED HIS PROBLEM PRIMARILY ON THE PAKISTANIS FOR HAVING GIVEN AWAY THOUSANDS OF WEAPONS TO ANTI-BANGLADESH ELEMENTS IN THE COUNTRYSIDE INSTEAD OF SURRENDERING THEM AS THEY SHOULD HAVE TO THE JOINT BENGALEE-INDIAN HIGH COMMAND. THE PRIME MINISTER ESTIMATED THAT AT THE TIME OF INDEPENDENCE SOME 150,000 WEAPONS WERE AT LARGE; HE HAD COLLECTED SOME 25,000 OR SO AND NOW HE WOULD BE COLLECTING THEM ALL.

6. I REPLIED THAT WE WERE ALL AWARE OF THE PROBLEMS HE HAD FACED IN APPROACHING HIS RECONCILIATION WITH PAKISTAN AND OUR ADMIRATION WAS THE GREATER FOR THE GENEROUS WAY HE HAD ACTED IN MAKING A SETTLEMENT POSSIBLE. I THANKED HIM FOR HIS REFERENCE TO AMERICAN GENEROSITY IN OUR AID TO BANGLADESH; I SAID WE WERE GLAD THAT WE HAD BEEN ABLE TO HELP AND THAT WE WOULD EXPECT TO CONTINUE OUR ASSISTANCE EFFORTS WITHIN OUR CAPACITIES, ALTHOUGH HE WOULD UNDERSTAND THAT OUR FUTURE AID NATURALLY WOULD NOT BE AT THE

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SAME LEVEL AS IT HAD BEEN DURING THE DIFFICULT PERIOD OF THE PAST TWO YEARS.

7. I TOLD HIM THAT WE WERE PLEASED AT THE WAY OUR RELATIONS HAD DEVELOPED OVER THE PAST TWO YEARS, AND THAT WE SAW NO REASON WHY THEY SHOULD NOT CONTINUE IN THEIR PRESENT GOOD STATE. I HAD BEEN IMPRESSED BY HOW MUCH IN COMMON THERE WAS IN OUR APPROACH. OUR OVERRIDING GOAL IN THE AREA WAS PEACE AND STABILITY, WHICH WAS BANGLADESH'S GOAL. IT SEEMED TO US THAT BANGLADESH WAS SEEKING A BALANCED RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER POWERS, WHINPBWJRYFSEORDED # WITH US VIEW. BANGLADESH'S FIRST CONCERN WAS TO ADDRESS ITS URGENT ECONOMIC PROBLEMS, AND IF HE WERE TO LOOK CLOSELY AT OUR MISSION IN DACCA HE WOULD FIND THAT PRIMARY FOCUS OF OUR PRESENCE WAS TO ASSIST AS WE COULD IN HELPING TO IMPROVE BANGLADESH'S AGRICULTURAL, ECONOMIC, AND EDUCATIONAL BASE. MUJIB AGREED AND SAID HE COULD ASSURE US THAT BANGLADESH WAS ALSO GOOD FRIEND OF US. HE WELCOMED US HELP AND WOULD NEED MORE FROM ALL ITS FRIENDS AS HIS COUNTRY WAS VERY POOR.

8. I CONCLUDED SUBSTANTIVE PORTION OF CONVERSATION BY RAISING QUESTION OF DEBT RESOLUTION (REPORTED IN SEPTTEL).

9. PRIME MINISTER TOLD ME AS I ROSE TO LEAVE THAT THIS WAS INFORMAL COUNTRY AND WHEN I NEEDED ANYTHING I SHOULD FEEL FREE TO SEE HIM.

10. COMMENT: I WILL SEND A SEPARATE MESSAGE ON PRIME MINISTER'S HEALTH BUT IF HE IS ADDRESSING HIS OTHER PROBLEMS WITH SAME WARMTH AND VIGOR WITH WHICH HE RECEIVED US TODAY, WE NEED NOT BE OVERLY CONCERNED. I DON'T THINK HE SET OUT TO ACCOMPLISH ANYTHING IN TODAY'S MEETING EXCEPT TO ASSURE ME OF A FRIENDLY START, TO COMMUNICATE SOMETHING OF HIS GENUINE GRATITUDE FOR AMERICAN GENEROSITY IN ITS ECONOMIC AID TO HIM IN PAST, TO BESPEAK IN A LOW KEY OUR CONTINUED ASSISTANCE, AND PERHAPS TO ELICIT OUR SYMPATHY FOR HIS CLAIMS TO A FAIR SETTLEMENT WITH PAKISTAN IN FORTHCOMING NEGOTIATIONS.  
BOSTER

NOTE BY OC/T: SECTION 2 OF 2 DACCA 1841; #PARA. 7. AS RECEIVED.  
CORRECTION TO FOLLOW.  
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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** Z  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** HEALTH, PRIME MINISTER, AGREEMENTS, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, POLITICAL SITUATION, FOREIGN ASSISTANCE  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 24 APR 1974  
**Decaption Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Decaption Note:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** BoyleJA  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
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**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** D740096-0246  
**From:** DACCA  
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**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** LIMDIS  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 4  
**Previous Channel Indicators:**  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** LIMDIS  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** BoyleJA  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 05 JUN 2002  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <05 JUN 2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <26 MAR 2003 by BoyleJA>  
**Review Markings:**

Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
30 JUN 2005

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** OURTESY CALL ON PRIME MINISTER SUMMARY: I SAW MUJIB FOR THIRTY MINUTES TODAY, FINDING HIM IN  
**TAGS:** PFOR, BG, US, (RAHMAN, MUJIBUR)  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005